THE PUNISHER®

DO NOT DISTURB

MARVEL

EDMONDSON
GERADS
SCHOONOVER
RUIZ

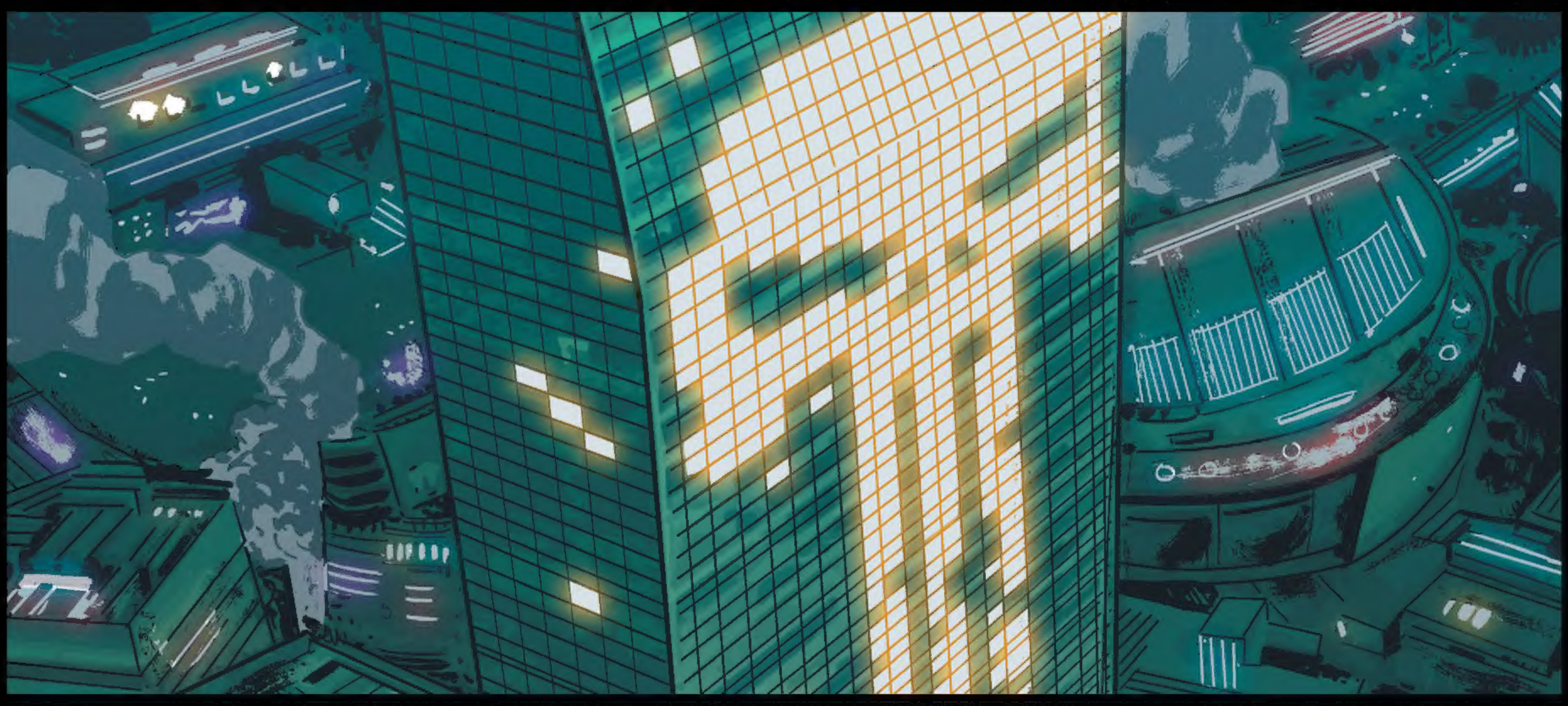
014

FRANK CASTLE was once a decorated Marine officer, an upstanding citizen and family man. Then his family was violently taken from him when they were accidentally killed in a mob hit. From that day on, Frank Castle shed his old identity and became a force of cold, calculated retribution and vigilantism known as

THE PUNISHER

PREVIOUSLY

It's been a long road back to Los Angeles for Frank. After being shot by the Howling Commandos, the Punisher escaped south of the border, where he was captured by a drug lord, sold, escaped, voluntarily sent to prison, and escaped again.



In the Punisher's absence the gangs have risen, led by the second Del Sol brother, plunging L.A. into chaos. Officer Stone was suspended for unnecessary force, only to later be arrested while seeking violent vengeance for the beating of Lou, the owner of the Nickel Diner. Under orders from above, the Howling Commandos attempted to lure Frank out by kidnapping his only remaining family and holding them in an evacuated L.A. hotel. Their plan worked.

Frank's coming...and he's bringing L.A.'s gangs with him.

DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT

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AS A MARINE, I FOUGHT UNDER A BANNER.

ATTACHED BY VELCRO TO MY ARM...

...COVERED IN DUST, BLOOD, SALT, MUD, AND GUNPOWDER.

I FOUGHT UNDER A BANNER.

I FIGHT UNDER A BANNER STILL.

COVERED IN DUST, BLOOD, SALT, MUD AND GUNPOWDER...

...AND MY ENEMIES WILL KNOW ME BY MY BANNER.

HERE THEY COME.

THEY HAVE THE BUILDING SURROUNDED.

THEY'LL TEAR IT DOWN TO MORTAR AND REBAR. TO MUSCLE, SINEW AND BONE.

DAMN PUNISHER'S BROUGHT AN *ARMY* OF THUGS RIGHT TO US, SIDEWINDER.

IT'S STILL OUR FIGHT, MYERS.

WE USE OUR BAIT AND WE BRING CASTLE DOWN BEFORE SUNRISE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH THEM?

TO THE LOBBY.

SIDEWINDER, I'VE ONLY GOT SO MUCH AMMO.

RUBY RED AND I HAVE PLENTY. JUST GET INTO POSITION.

COMMANDOS, THE PUNISHER IS THE TARGET.

WE PROTECT THE BAIT--THE FAMILY...

BUT EVERYTHING ELSE IS *COLLATERAL.*

THE CITY WILL BE OURS *TONIGHT.*

...

WHATEVER YOUR *PLANS* ARE, MR. SECRETARY, I DO NOT CARE. DON'T TRY TO MAKE ME CARE.

I JUST WANT YOUR *WEAPONS.*

THIS IS WHERE MY BROTHER AND I DISAGREED.

AND WHAT THESE MILITARY MEN CANNOT UNDERSTAND.

YOU DO NOT *CONTROL* THESE GANGS. YOU DON'T *LEAD* THEM. THEY ARE RABID DOGS.

YOU MERELY LET THEM LOOSE.

COME ON NOW. LET THE DOGS TEAR AT THE MEAT.

WE HAVE PRISONS TO OPEN, AND OTHER CITIES TO INSPIRE.

INTO THE RESTAURANT!

MYERS, REPORT.

I'M MOVING INTO POSITION, SIDEWINDER. THE GANGS ARE ALREADY OVERRUNNING THE HOTEL.

CASTLE'S GONNA GET HIS FAMILY KILLED!

HE'S HERE TO SAVE THEM. WE'RE HERE TO PROTECT THEM.

FEW AGAINST THOUSANDS. THIS IS THE HOWLING COMMANDO HISTORY, AND RIGHT NOW IT'S OUR MISSION.

CASTLE WANTS US DISTRACTED.

WE ARE *THAT*.

THEY'RE LIKE A SWARM OF...SWARM OF...SOMETHING THAT SWARMS.

THEY'RE *HOSTILES*, MYERS.

EYES ON.

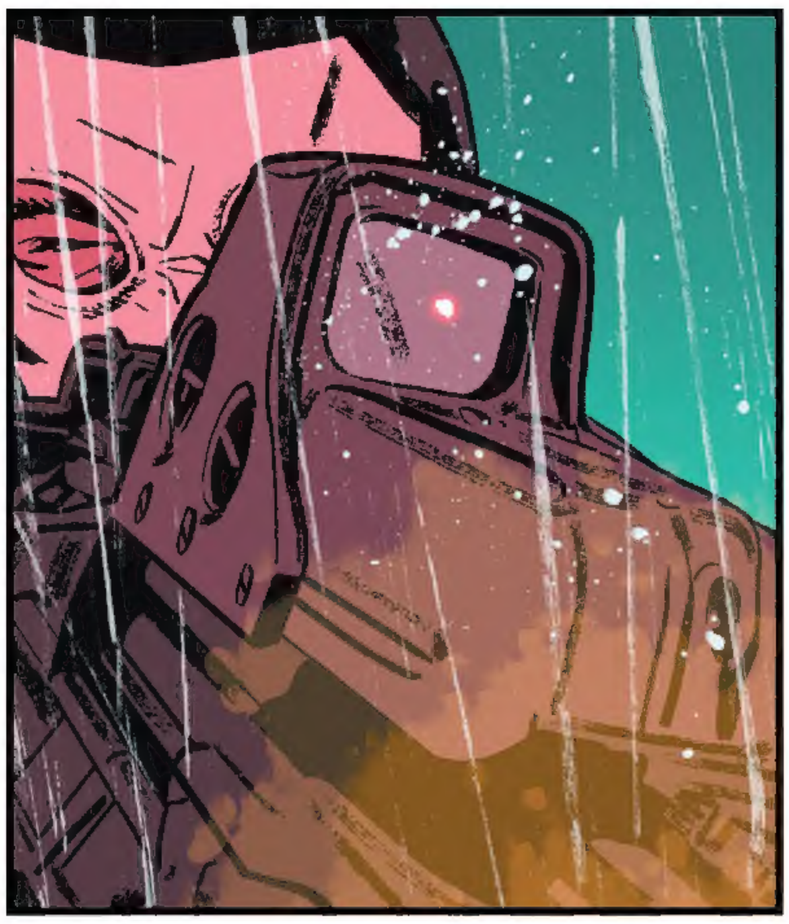
AND *WHERE'S CASTLE?*

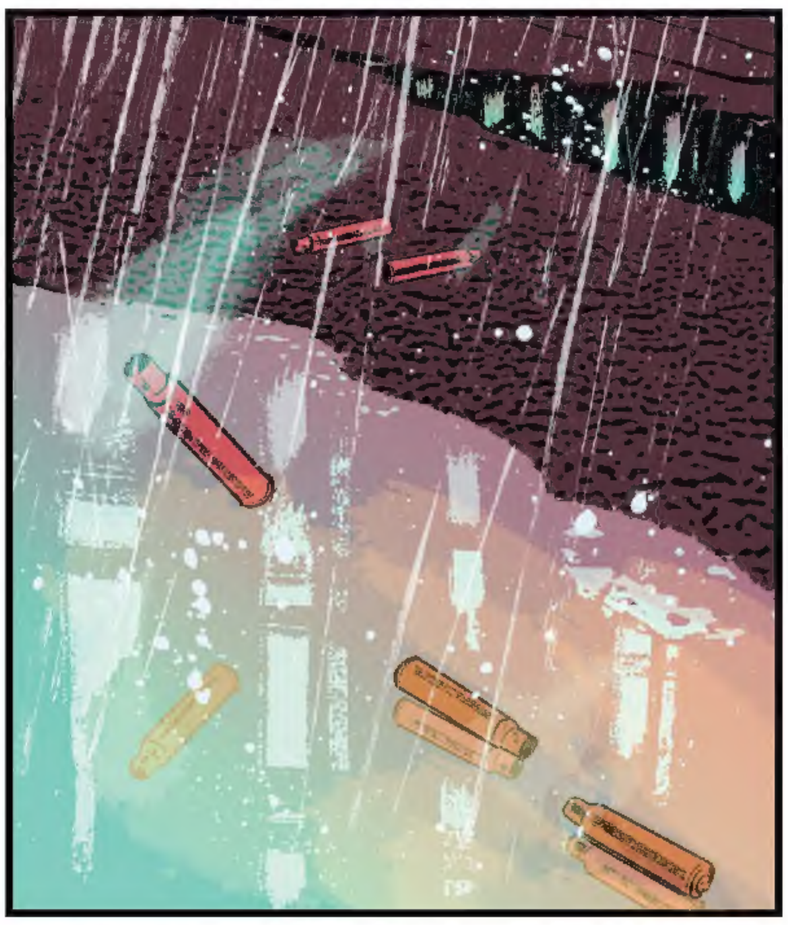
DING

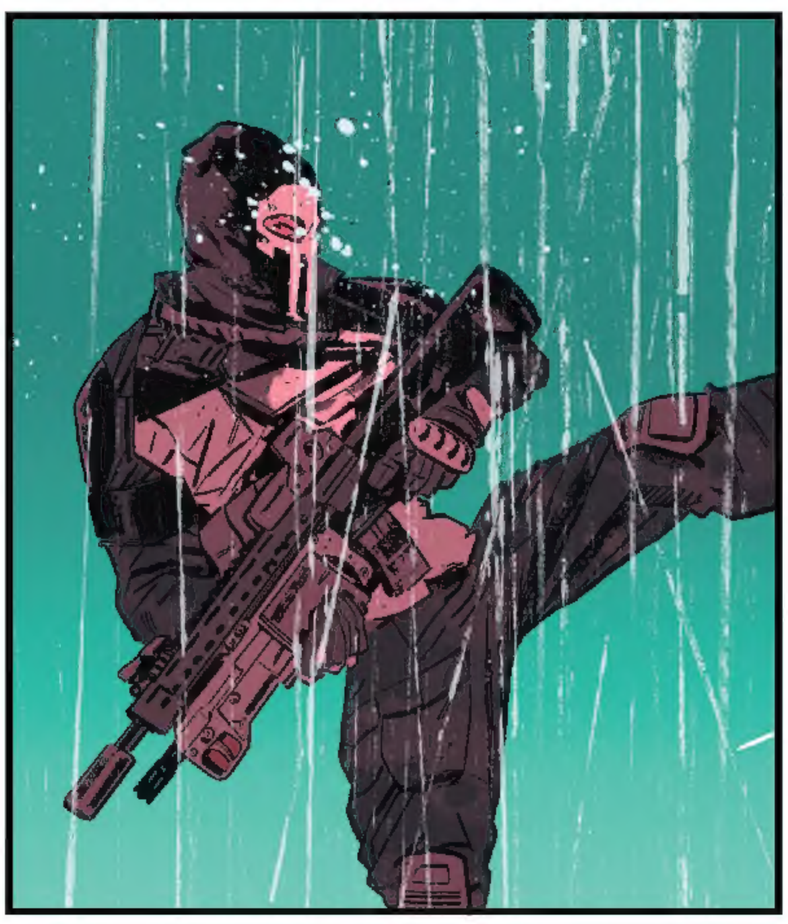
HERE I COME.

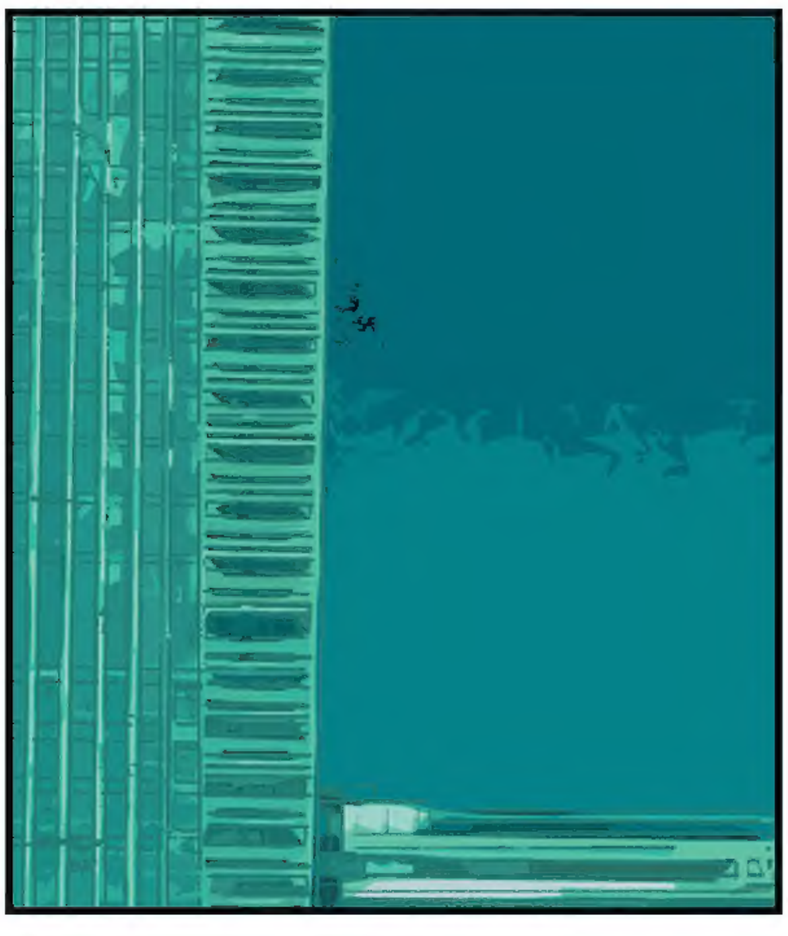
AND THEY...

...ARE JUST COLLATERAL DAMAGE.









SKULLGUY'S GONNA KILL A DOZEN BEFORE WE GET TO HIM!

I AIN'T AFRAID OF THAT GHOST FACE! WE'RE THE--

TINK

TINK

--KILLAHS?

TINK

BOOM

MYERS. IT'S GETTING HAIRY. FIND A WAY IN. WE NEED YOU.

COPY THAT, SIDEWINDER. THEY'RE SWARMING UP THE FLOORS LOOKING FOR CASTLE. I'M SNEAKING MY WAY DOWN.

YOU KNOW WHAT'S MISSING FROM OUR TRAINING?

WHAT'S THAT, RUBY RED?

MORE FIVE-STAR-HOTEL CLOSE QUARTERS COMBAT.

ENOUGH

GOTTA ADMIT ONE THING, SIDEWINDER...

...THE BAIT *WORKED.*

THAT'S WHY THEY PAY ME THE BIG BUCKS, RUBY RED.

AND WHY I HAVE A TON OF LIFE INSURANCE.

CRITICAL MASS.

THE BOILING RAGE OF THE HAVE-NOTS BUBBLING BENEATH THE FEET OF THE COMPLACENT.

CRITICAL MASS.

BY THE TIME THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DECLARES MARSHAL LAW THE CITY WILL HAVE FALLEN.

THE CRIMINALS WERE READY...

THEY JUST NEEDED AN EXCUSE. AN EXCUSE THAT BECAME *THEIR* BANNER. A BANNER OF ANARCHY AND AVARICE.

BUT THE THUGS AREN'T CLEVER ENOUGH TO FIGURE THIS OUT FOR THEMSELVES. SOMEONE ELSE RAISED THE FLAG ON THE POLE. SO *WHO* IS BEHIND IT?

WHO'S BEHIND THE STRATEGY?

WHO WAS BEHIND THE MEXICO ATTACKS?

WHEN IN DOUBT, LAY THE CARDS ON THE TABLE.

WHICH IS WHAT I'VE DONE HERE.

I'VE BUILT A DAMNED HOUSE OF CARDS.

...OR A HOTEL.

WHO KNEW LOS ANGELES HAD THIS KIND OF RAT PROBLEM?
MYERS! I NEED YOU *IN POSITION!*
A *WELL ARMED* RAT PROBLEM.
RUBY RED, CROSS THE ROOM. GIVE COVERING FIRE FROM 30 DEGREES NORTH.
COPY, BOSS.
IW KIWW OOH.
NEITHER OF US ARE GOING TO DIE TODAY, SIR.
WE'RE BOTH COUNTING ON YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW TO DO WHAT HE DOES BEST.
MONSAH...
COMMANDOS.
HEY.

COME IN HERE, CASTLE, IF YOU DON'T WANT YOUR FAMILY HURT.

BY MY HAND, OR BY ACCIDENT.

YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD FIND A CASTIGLIONE? THAT I WOULD FALL APART, DESPERATE TO SAVE MY FAMILY?

I ABANDONED THAT NAME A LONG TIME AGO, SERGEANT...

...ALONG WITH THE *SENTIMENT* IT IMPLIES.

I REFUSE TO BELIEVE YOU'RE THAT HEARTLESS, CASTLE.

YOU NEED BETTER INTEL, COMMANDO.

AND *YOU* DRAGGED INNOCENT PEOPLE INTO THIS FIGHT.

I DID WHAT I HAD TO DO. SO LONG AS YOU PLAY YOUR PART, THEY ARE IN NO DANGER.

I THINK YOU OVERESTIMATE YOUR CAPABILITIES. I CAME TO THIS FIGHT EXPECTING DEATH.

I COME TO MOST FIGHTS THAT WAY. YOU BROUGHT *CIVILIANS.*

YOU GAVE UP THE FLAG, CASTLE. YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THIS WAS COMING.

I LEFT THE FLAG TO TAKE UP ANOTHER BANNER...

AND I *DID* SEE THIS COMING.

ENOUGH!

LET THE FAMILY GO.

IT'S OVER, FRANK.

LET THE FAMILY--

THUNK

GOOD HIT, MYERS. PUNISHER IS DOWN

ABOUT TIME I EARNED MY KEEP AROUND HERE, I GUESS.

EXFIL TO PICKUP. MYERS, CALL IT IN.

WHAT ABOUT THE FAMILY, SIDEWINDER?

THAT'S UP TO THE SECRETARY.

A GIFT FROM CTOMS, OUR MEDIC KIT PROVIDER.

IT WILL STOP THE BLOOD. WON'T STOP THE PAIN.

GRAB THEM. WE SHOOT OUR WAY TO THE STREET...

...AND AWAIT EXTRACTION.

LLEVAREMOS EN LA SANGRE LA GRANDEZA SINDICAL

NO TENDRA PODER MAS LAGRANDEZA SINDICAL.

WHACK

NO TENDRÁ PODER MÁS GRANDE EL LABORISMO MUNDIAL.

THE PRISONERS ARE OUT. TAKE THE BANKS. TAKE CITY HALL.

HEY! HEY YOU!

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU *PAY FOR THIS!*

AND WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE? WHY WOULDN'T THE OTHER INMATES LET YOU OUT?

BECAUSE I'M A *COP!*

PRETTY. WHERE DID YOU SMUGGLE THIS IN?

SOMEWHERE YOU AREN'T GONNA SEE, CREEP.

YOU MISSED YOUR CALLING, JOINING THE POLICE. THAT FEISTINESS WOULD DO YOU WELL IN MY ORGANIZATION.

I'D RATHER ROT IN HERE.

I HAVE A BETTER IDEA.

BOYS... SHOW THIS CHARMING LADY WHAT WE THINK OF COPS.

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ADOPT, FRANK. ESPECIALLY A WHOLE CITY.

YOU GET YOUR HEART BROKEN. YOU RAISE A FLAG, A CITY BURNS.

THIS IS WHAT YOU FIGHT FOR?

THE MILITARY WILL COME. YOU STARTED THIS, CASTLE. THEY WILL CLEAN IT UP.

BZZZ BZZZ

SIDEWINDER HERE...YES, SIR... WE'RE ON OUR WAY EAST.

THAT'S FINE. GIVE ME COORDINATES ON THE BLACK SITE.

WE'LL BE THERE IN ONE HOUR.

...THANK YOU, SIR. THE HOWLING COMMANDOS GET IT DONE.